LEHIGH VALLEY ATARI XE XL ATARI ST XEGS USERS GROUP

L.V.A.U.G. NEWS

MEMBER OF NEAR US

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER-1994 ISSUE #5



North East Atari Regional User Support Group.

An alliance of Atari User Groups predominately from the North Eastern area of the United States.
NEARUS was organized to provide a network of communications between people who would not ordinarily get together but have common problems and concerns. A BBS network is set up, and a common newsletter issued periodically is planned. This gives us a broad base of die hard Atari users sharing their problems, concerns, and knowledge.
User groups in Canada and as far away as Germany have shown an interest in **NEARUS**.

The following list of BBS's support Nearus, with more joining in the near future.

ABUG	Reading area	215-779-7859
ACUTE	Lehigh Valley Pa.	215-261-0620
Bit Byters	Germany %LIAUG	516-221-8462
Help Key	Allentown area	215-868-4856
JACG	New Jersey	201-298-0161
LIAUG	Long Island N.Y.	516-221-8462
NEAT	NorthEast Pa.	215-335-4805
Ol'Hackers	New York	516-221-8462
RACE	New York	516-221-8462
SAGE	Erie Pa.	814-833-4073
SJACE	New Jersey	609-931-3014
STARR	Connecticut	203-421-4861

Editors note: We made every effort to include all known supporting BBS's, if any were left out, it was not done intentionally. Any additions or corrections are most welcome and will be so recorded in the following newsletter.





ATARI 800XL





AUGUST 94
MEETING
NOTES

Meeting called to order and opened in due form by President Art Paolini Jr.

Vice-President Jon Mordosky gave his report on Atari News; Jaguar developers are on course and there are approximately 150 developers trying to get into the action. Multiple players are coming soon, also a voice modem with headphones so you can play another person, lots of Jaguar promotions and gadgets are available along with the new games being released.

New music products out for ST's and Falcons, etc. In IBMland they have a PC of theirs' working like an Atari 8-bit.

There is going to be an Atari show in Bridgeport CONN. on August 27th and 28th.

The New Atari Classic has not published its new magazine yet from California.

There is a new "TOAD" catalogue out with all kinds of Atari stuff in it.

Art and Jon are working on ads for the bulletin boards to try and get more members interested.

Motion by Folsom and Douglas for club to purchase a used 1050 disk drive for our editor (his disk drive died recently). Motion carried.

Motion by Mordosky and Folsom for club to pay for the parts to repair the editor's old 1050 disk drive. Motion carried. Jon said he will donate the labor to the cause. The Editor (Larry Tischbein) wishes to thank the club for their help with his disk drive troubles it is greatly appreciated. Thanks again.

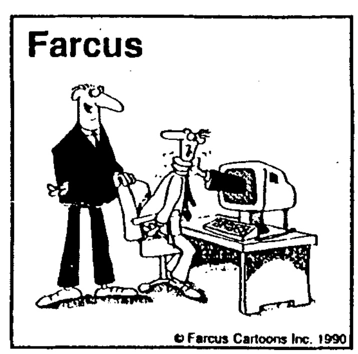
It was decided by those present at the August meeting to hold a "Nostalgia Nite" at the November meeting. The president wants the members to bring along their different computer equipment along to show each other all the different things that have been put out at one time or another by Atari. It was also decided that "refreshments" will be served that night, so come and get it and have a good time. Art and Jon will get out a flier to advertise the November meeting in the near future.

That my friends is the extent of the meeting notes for August 4th 1994.

"the Editor"

FOR SALE

ATARI set for sale: includes 2600 unit "hot shot" control, and 44 games. Call Jill Coulthard (610)-432-1511. Leave message if not home.



It's our new computer security system!

ATARI GIVING AWAY "FREE" BUMPER STICKERS

Atari has had some real Cool bumper stickers made up. They are black and feature the yellow Jaguar eyes as well as the blood-red Jaguar logo. I understand these are being shipped to the upcoming C.E.S. show, but I have managed to, well let's say, "put some aside for my friends"<g>.

So here's another freebie for everyone...(YEA!)

Send me a self-addressed and pre-stamped envelope and I'll put one of these "hot-off-the-press" three-color eye-poppers in it right back to you. The dimensions are "3x12" so keep that in mind. If you really do not want a gentle fold in it, send an envelope at least 12 inches long and make sure there's cardboard in it. If you are not sure how long 12 inches is, try a ruler.

Send to:

Don's Really Hot Jaguar
Bumper Sticker Freebie
Atari Corporation
PO Box 61657
Sunnyvale, CA 94089-1657

The bumper stickers are FREE as long as you promise that you'll proudly display it where all your friends will see it. I recommend getting Mom and Dad's permission before slapping it on their furniture, appliances or automobiles. Maybe they'll let you tape it in the back window of the car(tape it so the logo faces out please.)

I hope everyone likes these. Consider it a "THANKS" for your patience as we work our "bumpers" off getting some more software into your hot hands as fast as we can!

Your Editor's notes: This ad was copied from the Sage Scroll from Erie, Pa for June 1994. PS: Good luck to find a 12 inch envelope when this kid (your editor sent for his sticker) the biggest envelope the postoffice had was 11 inches, so my sticker will have a crease in it. Will bring it to the meeting when I receive it from Atari.



DJINNI
Aladdin comes to
the 8-bit
by Larry Mangum

Have you heard of Genie? Have you heard of Aladdin? Then you know that Aladdin is one of the best things about being on Genie. With its' automation of most functions on Genie, its a real joy to use. So much so that for approximately three years I've been bugging people on the 8-bit round table to provide the same kind of program for us 8-bitters. Well, guess what I certainly can't take much credit, but I now bring you...

DJINNI

Djinni is a program forthe Atari 800/XL/XE coputers that can automate many GEnie functions. It will capture messages, post replies, upload and download files just like its cousin, Aladdin.

HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS

Atari 800/XL/XE(800 requires 48K) Modem supporting AT command set RS-232 Interface (850, P:R, MIO, Black box, etc.) (modem & interface MUST support CarrierDetect)

RUNNING DJINNI

You must load your RS-232 driver before running Djinni. It makes no attempt to do so. The program has a memlo requirement of $2900, so after loading your RS-232 handler, ramdisk and whatever else you use, Memlo must be less than $2900. You must also remove any carts and disable Basic to ensure a Memtop of $BC1F.

Djinni can reside in a Sparta Dos subdirectory. All the files it creates will reside in the subdirectory, if you wish.

You will also find complete docs on the disk. And if I can find one, the RS-232 driver.

The second DOM, to somewhat compensate for a recent paucity of 8-bit DOM's is the recent ShareWare release of SpartDOS V3.2f. This is an incredibly powerful command line DOS that only requires a $20 investment to get a complete manual. It has on-line help to move you along and to get you started. This is the DOS that more BBS operators use and the reason is that you can do anything at all that you could possibly want with your system.

Your Editor's notes: This article is copied from PACE issue for May,June 1994 of the Diablo Valley Atari Computer Enthusiasts of California.

This space was for your article, but, we never got it! Please try to be more prompt next time.



SEPTEMBER 1994
MEETING
NOTES

Meeting called to order and opened in due form by President Art Paolini.

Vice-President Jon Mordosky made the following report: Text Pro 5.11 is out and Text Pro 5.22 will be out soon on the market. Express Terminal Products are on the market again. A company from Australia has 8-bit products for sale. New ST products are on market too. CD Rom player for the Jaguar is on market at $199.99.

Atari Navy was out for a sail on Locust Lake last Friday and they also had a sailboat in the armada, sail on fellows and ladies.

Art declared that the November meeting night will be "nostaliga night" so get your thinking caps on and let Art know at the October meeting what item or items you will bring to the November meeting.

Club disk for this month is a game disk from Germany.

Long Island Atari Group wants to swap library disks with us,one club disk of theirs' for one disk from our club library.

Art then demoed the club disk for the month one is a race game that is very different and very interesting, there is also an astronomy program on the same side which is very good. Side two is a demo version of Sissyfoss which is basically a very good maize game.

Bill Folsom gave a demo on the ST called MagicSoft which is a program where you can change things in game programs very easily, it the does the re-writing for you and makes the re-programming a lot easier. It is a very good program for re-working game progams to suit your needs. Bill and his son then demoed a game on the ST called Kid Kong, naturally the son is a better game player. Thanks to both you guys for a very good demo.

Next month's meeting will be used to demo how to use a modem, bring your modem problems and questions to the October meeting.

That is all the meeting notes for the September 1, 1994.

Larry Tischbein
Secretary



You sent for a computer expert?



* BEGINNER'S COLUMN *

Synfile: The Only Database You'll Ever Need!

By: John W. Dashner (LVAUG)

Synfile is a powerful 8 bit database for storing and retrieving information. It was released by Synapse software and, later, acquired by Broderbund software.

On the original release, you could find a tutorial on the reverse side of the disk which was very helpful in getting you started with the setup of your own database. However, when the 130XE's were released, the tutorial was eliminated in favor of the XL/XE versions. If you used Synfile on the older 800's, you needed the translator disk to boot Synfile. Synfile is a complete menu driven program, with prompts at the top and bottom of the screen; this eliminates guessing.

Once you get acquainted with Synfile, you can do away with almost every other database, mailing list, reminder list, or collection/inventory program that you have.

Listed below are some of the files which you can custom make on your own:

* MAILING LIST - Select your format and print out all or a selected group of labels.

* HOME INVENTORY - Make this file any way you wish; list where hidden ID numbers are, values, etc. Print out the whole list or just one room, and have the values total up automatically.

* COIN, STAMP, or any COLLECTIBLE - Set up fields to compute a selling price guide, based on present value entered; compute earnings ratios, etc.

* MONTHLY MEETINGS OR REMINDERS - Print the month you want and the data you want on the printout.

* LIABILITY/TAX - Track your monthly bills and income tax deductions; one printout at the end of the year will have your Income tax deductions ready for filing.

* LIBRARY - Format your books, record albums, audio and video tapes, etc. any way you wish.

* VEHICLE - Track you repair, service records, and expenses; a print out of this will tell you exactly what you spent on your vehicle from day one to present.

* CATEGORIZE - Do this for icons or pictures to ease the search for certain ones (I even rate Musikfest performances by comparing past records from a printout and, then, I decide which acts I wish to see in the upcoming year).

This list is endless, but remember: by loading one program, you can access all the above and more, and just by pressing a few keys.

It's too bad you cannot put this on a hard disk; you wouldn't have to switch disks.

When you create a file, you are actually creating four different files:

* TBL - Table file; a description of database form. Contains all the fields, formulas, etc.
* CNF - Number of records, disks, index fields, current record number, etc.
* IDX - Index data. You should name the fields, on which you are going to search, as index fields; it will search faster.
* DXX - (XX = disk number). Actual data is stored in this file.

Synfile is compatible with Syncalc, Syntrend, and Atariwriter.

Once your database is set up, you can change or add fields without loosing or re-entering data. All you have to do is merge the old file into the new.

You can create subfiles by selecting desired records and storing them in the separate subfile. You can tell the program how you want the file to be printed and which records you want listed on that file. You can do a screen dump of a record as shown on the screen.

Once you have records stored in a file, make at least one backup copy of the file, in case you accidently mess up the original; especially, while you are getting accustomed to the program and its options. And, make sure you close the file after each use or you may lose, or completely destroy the file. If a disk gets full, make sure you follow the instructions that appear on the screen or, again, you can lose all your data.

Synfile is capable of.......

* Up to 66 fields per record.
* Up to 16 disks per file.
* Up to 16 sort files.
* Up to 16 search fields.
* Records per file are limited by Ram and Index length.
* Form size - 80 characters x 21 lines including field names of up to 31 characters.

Hopefully, next issue, I'll be ready to do a review of SFP - a new Synfile utility program, recently released by Donald R. Seay. I must, first, get accustomed to using it, though.

<u>Note</u>: Atari is a trademark of Atari Corporation. Broderbund, Synapse, and Synfile+ are trademarks of Broderbund/Synapse. SFP is copyrighted by D. R. Seay.

HAVE A GOOD DAY

BACK TO BASICS

As promised last month here are some of the DOS commands that should be helpful to you is using your computer. These commands are from DOS 2.5 but they should work with most any other DOS.

A.DISK DIRECTORY
This option allows you to read the directory of a disk. It shows filenames,extenders and sectors used.

B.RUN CARTRIDGE
This option, though not properly named, allow you to go to BASIC from DOS.

C.COPY FILE
This option allows you to copy a file to screen, printer or to another disk(if you have 2 disk drives.)

D.DELETE FILES
This option allows you to delete a file from a disk.

E.RENAME FILE
This option allows you to rename a file on your disk.

F.LOCK FILE
This option allows you to lock a file so it can not be written to or erased.

G. UNLOCKFILE
This option is the opposite of LOCK FILE.

H. WRITE DOS FILES
This option will write DOS file to your disk.

I. FORMAT DISK
This option allows you to format a disk in 1 1/2 density.

J. DUPLICATE DISK
This option allows to duplicate a disk.

L.BINARY LOAD
This option allows you to load a BINARY or M/L file.

O. DUPLICATE FILE
This option allows you to duplicate a file to another disk.

P. FORMAT SINGLE
This option allows you to format a disk in single density.

Now for some explainations:
Why do you need a directory listing? Some disks have multiple files on them and may not have a menu. If you know what file you want you can see if it is on that disk.

Why, do I want to go to BASIC? You must be in BASIC in order to run a BASIC program or just fool around.

Why COPY a file to screen or printer? You can learn a lot about your program just by looking at it as it is written. To COPY a file to screen type in the following when in DOS, Press C and then RETURN. You will get an on screen prompt such as:COPY--FROM,TO?
Type in the following:
D:filename. ext,E:
The computer will read the file and print it on the screen. To copy to your printer type the same command except substitute P: for the E:

Whye write DOS to a disk? A computer will not boot a disk unless there is a DOS file on the disk.

Why format a disk? A disk will not accept data unless it is formatted. Enhanced or 1 1/2 density will only work on a 1050 drive. A word of caution: first ask yourself if there is anything on the disk that you



want to keep, since formatting destroys all data on a disk.

Duplicate disk is just another sector copier and is very slow.

Format single is the same as option I escept it formats a disk in Single Density which is the most common density.

DOS is the Disk Operating System needed to boot a disk.

DUP is the Disk Utility Program which we just discussed.

Don't ask me why you type DOS when you want DUP. I have never figured this out and no one that I've talked to has an explaination.

(Editor's note: This article is reproduced from the March 1994 issue of (FR)ANTIC the official Alamo Area Atari User Association 8-bit user group newsletter.)



"Your editor and his new word processor at work."

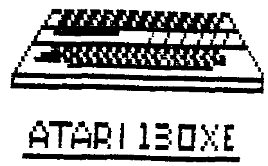
NOVEMBER 1994

THURSDAY 3

LVAUG NOSTALGIA NITE ON OUR REGULAR MEETING NITE OF NOVEMBER 3RD "BE THERE"

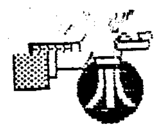
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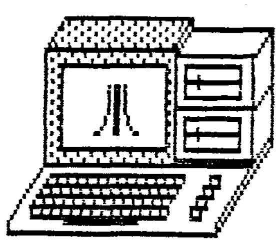
LVAUG NOSTALGIA NITE





NOVEMBER 3RD

"BE THERE!"





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SUPPORTING BBS'S
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WESTEX-(215)776-7495

LEHIGH VALLEY ATARI USERS GROUP

Meets the first Thursday of every month at 7:30 P.M. at the
Lincoln Technical Institute
5151 Tilghman Street
Allentown, PA 18105

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